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A Word from the Chairman



The Chairman saluting the national colors at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C., on July 29, 1993.

DOD (Don Parker)

we have come together as a joint team in an unprecedented way over these last four years

Before I wish *JFQ*'s readers fair winds and following seas, dry foxholes, and clear air, let me offer a few thoughts as a parting shot.

The past four years have been historic ones. So many changes have occurred that it is hard to chronicle them without losing a listener's attention. We have lived through a

time that historians will labor over for decades to come, trying to sort out the heroes from the villains, fact from fiction, and momentous from trivial or transient events.

One very real and very relevant change to those of us who serve in the Armed Forces is that

we are getting smaller. For the foreseeable future, nothing is going to happen to reverse that trend.

What is important is that we have laid the groundwork to get smaller without losing the high quality that has become the hallmark of America's military. This should be the continuing mission of all our men and women—officers, warrant officers, NCOs, and enlisted. No matter how small we get, we must keep our Armed Forces the best in the world.

We must provide them with the best leadership, equipment, support, and quality of life. We must also guard against their ever having to answer the call of an uncertain trumpet.

Men and women do not go in harm's way as a businessman pursues a contract, a lawyer a case, or a professor a research project. The GI goes with his or her life on the line, every time. From that fundamental distinction comes the all-powerful reason to exercise the

utmost restraint and good judgment in sending America's best and brightest into the cauldron of combat.

We are fortunate to have national leaders who understand this basic fact of military power. We are also fortunate because our leaders understand that when they do have to send our men and women in harm's way they send them to achieve a decisive victory. They should expect no less—and we should give them no less.

Maximum effort to accomplish the mission, to win decisively, demands joint action on the battlefield. If there is a legacy of which I am the proudest, it is that we have come together as a joint team in an unprecedented way over these last four years. I commend all of you for this remarkable achievement—and I challenge you to stay true to this magnificent military family we have built together.

Your new Chairman, General John Shalikashvili, is as dedicated to the team as any man I know. The family will prosper under his wise chairmanship. Give him your full support.

As I depart now, I wish all of you great success in the future. I am proud of every soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coast-guardian in the force. You're the best and you always will be.

COLIN L. POWELL
Chairman
of the
Joint Chiefs of Staff

General Colin L. Powell, USA, is Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was previously Commander in Chief, Forces Command, and also served as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.